




Mellow  
Yellow  
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Contact: [weirdhui@gmail.com](mailto:weirdhui@gmail.com)



A Chinese anarchist feminist said: what we "mean by equality between the sexes is not just that the men will no longer oppress women. We also want men to no longer be oppressed by other men, and women no longer to be oppressed by other women." Thus women should "completely overthrow rulership, force men to abandon all their special privileges and become equal to women, and make a world with neither the oppression of women nor the oppression of men." [He Zhen, quoted by Peter Zarrow, *Anarchism and Chinese Political Culture*, p. 147]



Kia ora koutou katoa, 大家好

This episode of Mellow Yellow II, is brought to you by Bamboo (MZ) in the font Book Antiqua, and Dumpling (hannah Ho) in the font Berlin San FB. We want to make the next issue open to contributions so if you want to contribute, get in touch with us.

I am stoked as to be doing the second Mellow Yellow with Bamboo, and not all on my lonesome. The same dilemmas, contradictions, frustrations and complexities surrounding your everyday run of the mill oppression exasperated by ignorance, still flummoxes me, as it did in the first issue. However, it's all made more bearable in the solidarity, alliances and friendships formed through struggle, good conversation and reflection with Bamboo. We hereby present to you Mellow Yellow II. Yippee!!!

Dumpling 饺子

I want to start off by explaining my motivations for contributing to this issue of Mellow Yellow. When the first issue came out, I remember how much of an inspiration it was for me. Having been involved in radical/anarchist activism and politics for a few years now, I never really felt there was that much literature that spoke directly to me or anything that engaged in and reflected my experiences. That's why when I read Mellow Yellow; it was like a liberating breath of fresh air. It addressed issues that I had always thought about, but never knew how to talk about. I think dialogue and relationship building between radical womyn of colour is really important to counter the hegemonic patriarchal Pakeha-dominated capitalist system that pervades our everyday lives. Talking about issues and naming the problems are small steps to start changing the situation and challenging oppression.

To those of you who have experienced racism, ethnocentrism, colonialism, sexism (from multiple cultures), homophobia, ageism, being poor or working class or any form of oppression to a combination of all them, this is for you.

In the spirit of feminism, it's about the personal being political. It's about opening up a space in which Asian womyn in Aotearoa can speak and



communicate our specific and diverse experiences, to create understanding between all oppressed people, to support each other, to inspire solidarity and organize collectively for a better world.

This is to declare: We do exist!

Sometimes it's easy to forget that we exist in the midst of a dominant culture that does not acknowledge our existence, does not reflect back our experiences in any way. Racism today is not as overt as it used to be, at least in the legal sphere. But it is still out there, I see it every day and the impacts of colonialism in Aotearoa are still very much visible if you know how to look. The idea of race is still persistent today in public discourse and it still has oppressive consequences on people of colour – both indigenous and migrant populations. We've come a long way but there's still a long way to go. We got lots of work to do.

Bamboo 竹子



[www.mellowyellow-aotearoa.blogspot.com](http://www.mellowyellow-aotearoa.blogspot.com)

## O Maua Pepeha

Ko Panshan toku maunga. He maunga tarakona, takaaamiomio. He maha oona ingoa kaarangeranga. Tuu ana ko Panshan anake. Motuhake taana ahuatanga. Kei te tihi o te maunga te ngaahere. Kaei waenganui o te maunga nga toka. Kei te take o te maunga te wai. Ko Yuanbaoshi te ingoa o te toka rongonui.


Ko Haihe toku awa. Rere ana i waenganui o te taone. He hohunu, he kokikoki, he roa, aa iaiane, kua waimate i te waiparu.

Ko Tianjin toku rohe. He taone nui, he whenua papatahi. He kainga no te tinitini me te manomano o te tangata. Kei te raki ko te Haina. E muri ana i toku whenua.

Ko Hainamana toku iwi.

Ko Haina toku whenua, toku ihi, toku tapu, toku turangawaewae hoki.

Ko MZ toku ingoa.




Ka tuku oku maioha ki Ranginui e tu iho nei. Ki Papatuanuku e takoto ana nei. Mea o raua tamariki nui tonu.

Ka tuku oku maioha hoki ki te manawhenua, otira te mauri o te rohe nei.

He mihi atu me he manaaki i o tatou tupuna i hikoi ake nei, i o tatou taha, i nga wa katoa me kei konei i tenei ra.

I haere mai oku tupunu i Haina ki te tonga, ki Malaysia. I haere mai oku matua, i Malaysia ki Aotearoa noho ie. I whanau mai i te Whanganui a tara.

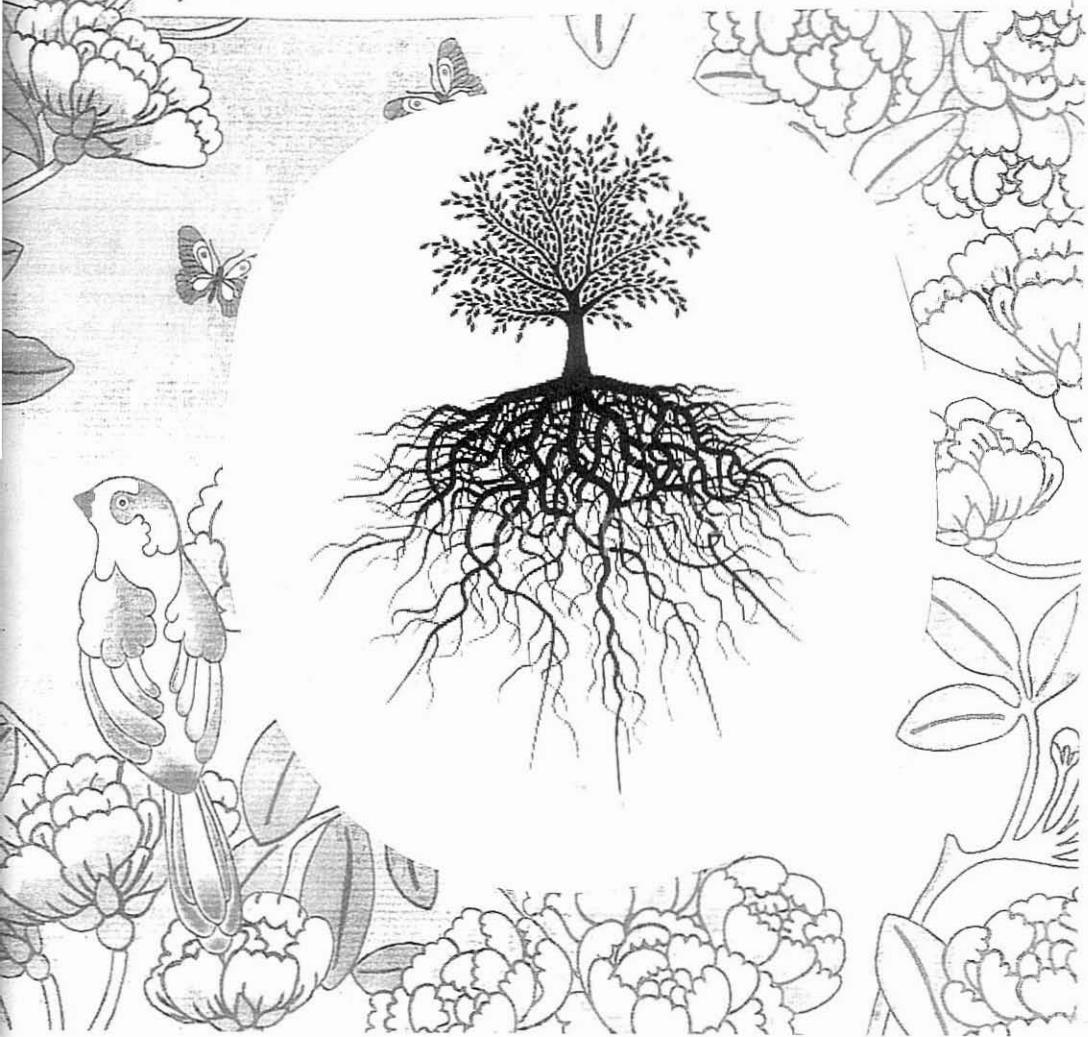
Ko hannah Ho wai ling ahau.



## "Bie wang ben" 别忘本

This common Chinese saying translated to English means "don't forget your origins, roots or past". No matter who you are today, you are nothing without your past. Don't forget where you've been. Don't forget your history. Don't forget times of hardship and struggle. Remember where you have come from.

In remembering past hardship and suffering, it's easier to empathize with people who are in the same situations or circumstances you've been in yourself.



## Colonisation of my birthplace

Going back to this idea of not forgetting your history, I'd like to share a history of colonialism and occupation of the city I was born in. I say "a" history rather than "the" history because this is a history I learned from a Tianjin museum and history or versions of history are not always absolutely accurate as we all know. So I was born in a city called Tianjin. It's a port city just south of Beijing. At the moment its population is around 12 million. Haihe (海河) is the river that flows through the middle of the city. Panshan (盘山) is the nearest mountain. An uncle of mine once told me that if I wanted to learn the past 5000 years of Chinese history to visit Xi'an, if I wanted to learn about the past 1000 years of Chinese history to visit Beijing, but you can learn a lot about the past 100 years of Chinese history from Tianjin.

After visiting the Tianjin museum with my 老爷 (maternal grandpa), I realized how little I knew about the history of my hometown 老家. The history of Tianjin display was quite emotional for me: partly because of the content and partly because I knew nothing about it. It's a whole history I've been cut off from and deprived of. It was the history of the Tianjin anti-colonial resistance. Like colonialism everywhere, it had fucking awful impacts on people here - invasion, mass murder, burning and raping. In Tianjin, it was the '8 Allied Powers' (八国联军) against one city. These were America, Japan, France, Germany, Russia, Austria-Hungary, Britain and Italy trying to take control over Tianjin to eventually take over China. Japan succeeded and occupied for a while but the colonizers were eventually fought off because of the strength of the anti-imperialist movement. It was still a brutal occupation which has created animosity between Chinese and Japanese people, but today it is mostly my grandparents' generation who still remembers it and feels strongly about it.



## Immigration

Since I migrated to this country, racism has affected me in a huge way, whether I was conscious of it or not at the time. It was one of those things you don't really think about 'til you're exposed to ways of talking about it, using language to identify and name it as a form of oppression. I remember when my parents and I first arrived in Aotearoa. I arrived in Aotearoa at age 6 with my parents, and we first settled in a working class area in South Auckland where there were clusters of migrant populations. We were living in rented units and houses in South Auckland with several other newly migrated Chinese families, some from the same city - Tianjin 天津. I don't remember primary school there very well, but as soon as I picked up basic English, I could tell that some kids were making fun of me for being Chinese, for having black hair, yellow skin and smaller slanted eyes and for not knowing English very well. Some of the kids were almost territorial; it was because I wasn't born here that made me subject to teasing and bullying.



No racism here



Yeah right.

## Internalised racism

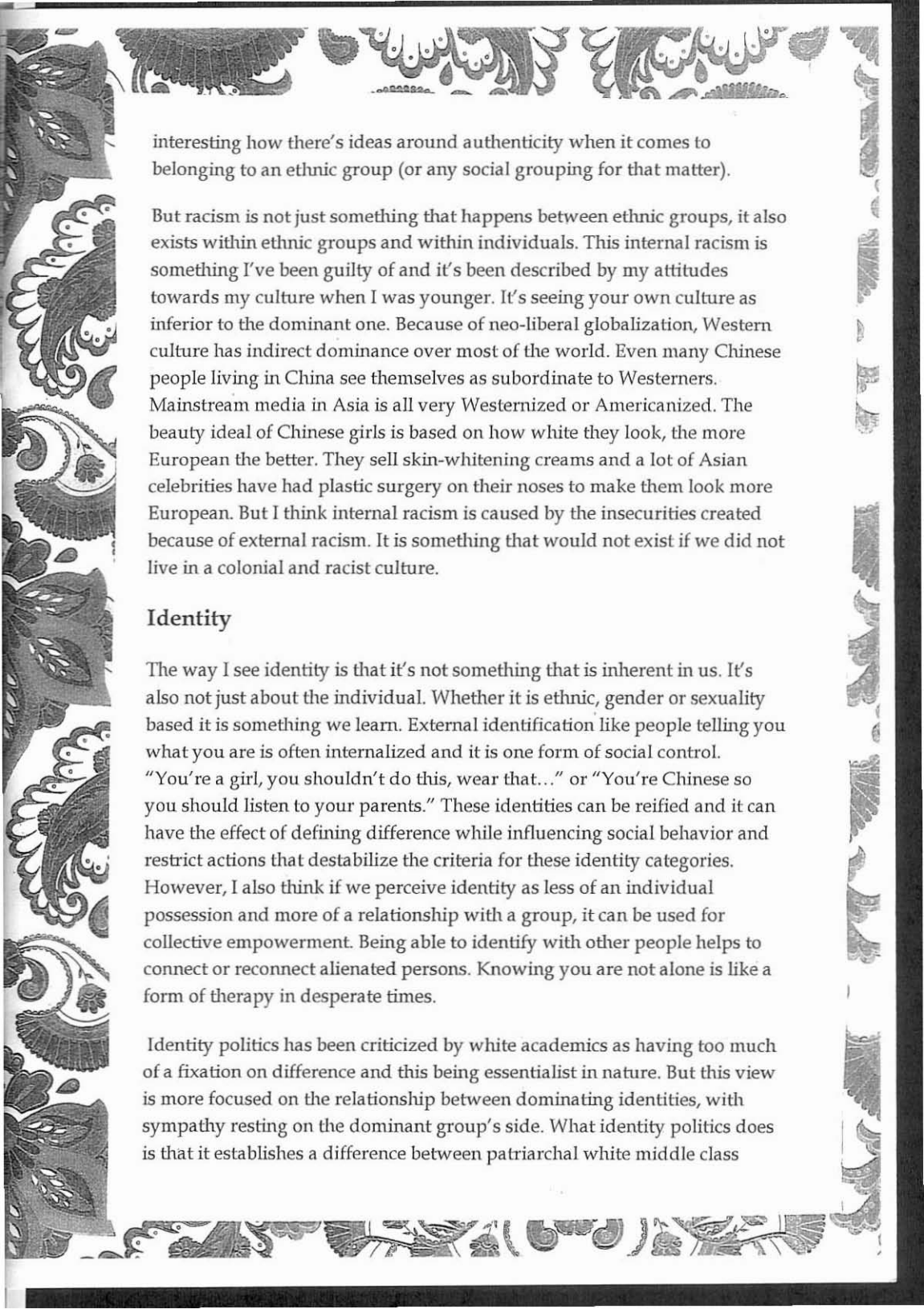
Internalised racism wasn't something I started to think about until a couple of years ago when I began to realize how I had spent most of my childhood wanting to be white; how I would distance myself away from other Chinese people, and how whenever someone asked me where I was from, I would answer "Auckland". I remember when I was still in primary school and learning English. Looking back at it now it seems the better I got at English, the more pressure I felt to assimilate. I was embarrassed of speaking mandarin and I would always avoid it when I'm around "Kiwi" people. I was also embarrassed of my parents, I would always hide the forms whenever it was parent-teacher evening. What I realize now is that I was ashamed of my heritage and culture. My parents and my language are just symbols of the culture that I was ashamed of being associated with.

As I became more and more accepted as "kiwi" I would further distance myself from Chinese culture. In Intermediate school, some of the white guys would say stuff like, "You're not *really* Asian." It meant that I was okay because I could speak English without a funny accent and most of my friends are "kiwi". I developed a hybrid identity. I was not white but I wasn't completely Chinese either. Physically I look Chinese but culturally I've assimilated into 'Kiwi' culture because I have spent most of my life here.

I was made to feel that I should assimilate because of societal pressures, and because I could assimilate more successfully than my parents, it created internal racism. This is still something I struggle with today and I don't think it is acceptable. But I think it comes from deep insecurities and fears of alienation and ostracism.

A friend of my sister was telling me about a Chinese girl in her school who constantly disses Asians. "People think you're cool if you diss your own race".

A friend said to me the other day, that I'm pretty much 'kiwi' (as insinuating the dominant culture) and not really Chinese. I thought about this and responded by saying that isn't true because unlike most people considered 'kiwi' (which is essentially a white identity), I don't have white privilege. People identify me as Chinese and I experience racism because of that. I am still tied to family in China and I can speak and understand mandarin. It's



interesting how there's ideas around authenticity when it comes to belonging to an ethnic group (or any social grouping for that matter).

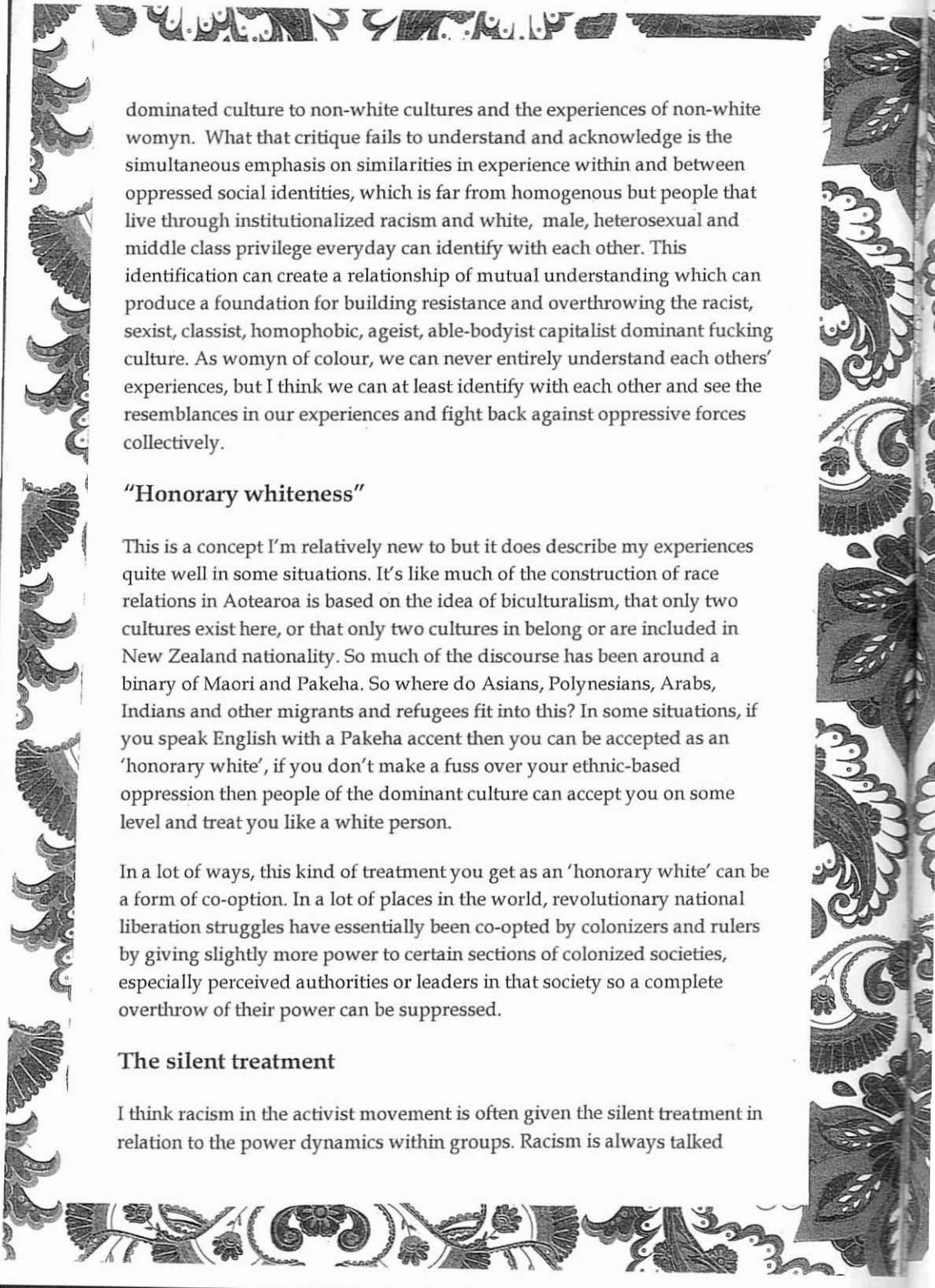
But racism is not just something that happens between ethnic groups, it also exists within ethnic groups and within individuals. This internal racism is something I've been guilty of and it's been described by my attitudes towards my culture when I was younger. It's seeing your own culture as inferior to the dominant one. Because of neo-liberal globalization, Western culture has indirect dominance over most of the world. Even many Chinese people living in China see themselves as subordinate to Westerners. Mainstream media in Asia is all very Westernized or Americanized. The beauty ideal of Chinese girls is based on how white they look, the more European the better. They sell skin-whitening creams and a lot of Asian celebrities have had plastic surgery on their noses to make them look more European. But I think internal racism is caused by the insecurities created because of external racism. It is something that would not exist if we did not live in a colonial and racist culture.

## Identity

The way I see identity is that it's not something that is inherent in us. It's also not just about the individual. Whether it is ethnic, gender or sexuality based it is something we learn. External identification like people telling you what you are is often internalized and it is one form of social control. "You're a girl, you shouldn't do this, wear that..." or "You're Chinese so you should listen to your parents." These identities can be reified and it can have the effect of defining difference while influencing social behavior and restrict actions that destabilize the criteria for these identity categories. However, I also think if we perceive identity as less of an individual possession and more of a relationship with a group, it can be used for collective empowerment. Being able to identify with other people helps to connect or reconnect alienated persons. Knowing you are not alone is like a form of therapy in desperate times.

Identity politics has been criticized by white academics as having too much of a fixation on difference and this being essentialist in nature. But this view is more focused on the relationship between dominating identities, with sympathy resting on the dominant group's side. What identity politics does is that it establishes a difference between patriarchal white middle class





dominated culture to non-white cultures and the experiences of non-white womyn. What that critique fails to understand and acknowledge is the simultaneous emphasis on similarities in experience within and between oppressed social identities, which is far from homogenous but people that live through institutionalized racism and white, male, heterosexual and middle class privilege everyday can identify with each other. This identification can create a relationship of mutual understanding which can produce a foundation for building resistance and overthrowing the racist, sexist, classist, homophobic, ageist, able-bodyist capitalist dominant fucking culture. As womyn of colour, we can never entirely understand each others' experiences, but I think we can at least identify with each other and see the resemblances in our experiences and fight back against oppressive forces collectively.

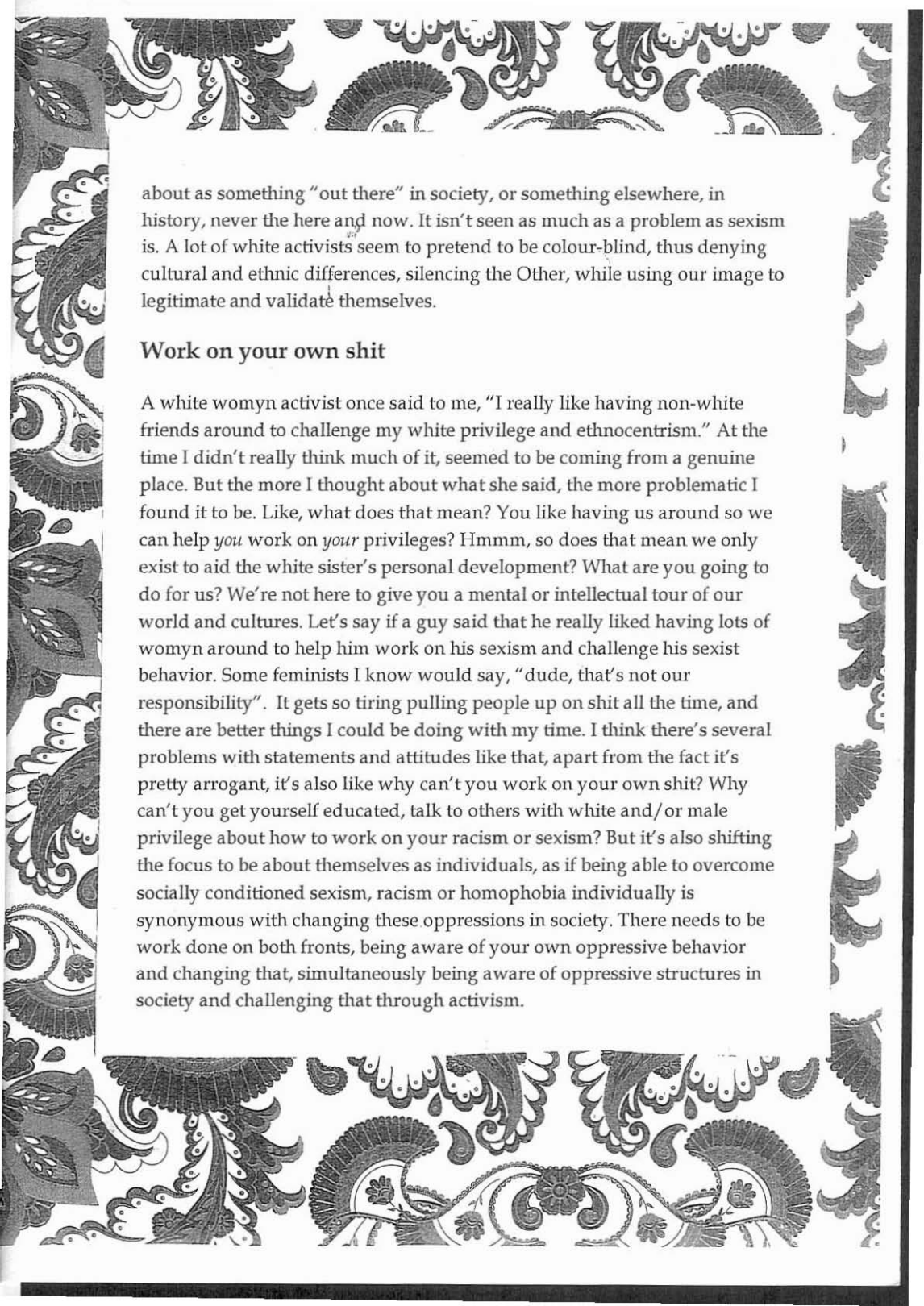
### **"Honorary whiteness"**

This is a concept I'm relatively new to but it does describe my experiences quite well in some situations. It's like much of the construction of race relations in Aotearoa is based on the idea of biculturalism, that only two cultures exist here, or that only two cultures belong or are included in New Zealand nationality. So much of the discourse has been around a binary of Maori and Pakeha. So where do Asians, Polynesians, Arabs, Indians and other migrants and refugees fit into this? In some situations, if you speak English with a Pakeha accent then you can be accepted as an 'honorary white', if you don't make a fuss over your ethnic-based oppression then people of the dominant culture can accept you on some level and treat you like a white person.

In a lot of ways, this kind of treatment you get as an 'honorary white' can be a form of co-option. In a lot of places in the world, revolutionary national liberation struggles have essentially been co-opted by colonizers and rulers by giving slightly more power to certain sections of colonized societies, especially perceived authorities or leaders in that society so a complete overthrow of their power can be suppressed.

### **The silent treatment**

I think racism in the activist movement is often given the silent treatment in relation to the power dynamics within groups. Racism is always talked



about as something "out there" in society, or something elsewhere, in history, never the here and now. It isn't seen as much as a problem as sexism is. A lot of white activists seem to pretend to be colour-blind, thus denying cultural and ethnic differences, silencing the Other, while using our image to legitimate and validate themselves.

### Work on your own shit

A white womyn activist once said to me, "I really like having non-white friends around to challenge my white privilege and ethnocentrism." At the time I didn't really think much of it, seemed to be coming from a genuine place. But the more I thought about what she said, the more problematic I found it to be. Like, what does that mean? You like having us around so we can help *you* work on *your* privileges? Hmmm, so does that mean we only exist to aid the white sister's personal development? What are you going to do for us? We're not here to give you a mental or intellectual tour of our world and cultures. Let's say if a guy said that he really liked having lots of womyn around to help him work on his sexism and challenge his sexist behavior. Some feminists I know would say, "dude, that's not our responsibility". It gets so tiring pulling people up on shit all the time, and there are better things I could be doing with my time. I think there's several problems with statements and attitudes like that, apart from the fact it's pretty arrogant, it's also like why can't you work on your own shit? Why can't you get yourself educated, talk to others with white and/or male privilege about how to work on your racism or sexism? But it's also shifting the focus to be about themselves as individuals, as if being able to overcome socially conditioned sexism, racism or homophobia individually is synonymous with changing these oppressions in society. There needs to be work done on both fronts, being aware of your own oppressive behavior and changing that, simultaneously being aware of oppressive structures in society and challenging that through activism.

秋瑾〈日人石井君索和即用原韻〉

漫雲女子不英雄，萬裡乘風獨向東。  
詩思一帆海空闊，夢魂三島月玲瓏。  
銅駝已陷悲回首，汗馬終慚未有功。  
如許傷心家國恨，那堪客裡度春風。

Don't tell me women  
are not the stuff of heroes,  
I alone rode over the East Sea's  
winds for ten thousand leagues.  
My poetic thoughts ever expand,  
like a sail between ocean and heaven.  
I dreamed of your three islands,  
all gems, all dazzling with moonlight.  
I grieve to think of the bronze camels,  
guardians of China, lost in thorns.  
Ashamed, I have done nothing;  
not one victory to my name.  
I simply make my war horse sweat.  
Grieving over my native land  
hurts my heart. So tell me;  
how can I spend these days here?  
A guest enjoying your spring winds?

Qiu Jin





## walking grandma

I see you jungle hidden daylight  
traintracked footsteps by night  
parting with sole possession jewellery  
the only padding for a railway footed journey

did you know your grandchildren would lose your voice

burning home-songs crackle under white noise  
smoldering sacrificed on assimilations altars  
woven smoke tracing voices back  
on moving paths of ancestral landings

did you know your grandchildren would lose your voice

tongues cut out by "wanting the best for you"  
snakes up, seeps out, hollow chest murmurs  
tight throat chokes, never makes it past goldenfish lips  
sing me smells of chinese soil never returned

did you know your grandchildren would lose your voice

sing me yellow children birthed from ancient lands  
ancestors bones farewellled on hopes eternal sojourn  
destitution famine war spark journeys rays  
across walked traintracks, airspace and oceans

to hope

breathe your grandchildren into our voices

## Talking to my younger sisters

The other day I went to a family friend gathering with my parents and sister. The families that were there are all Chinese immigrants that came to Aotearoa around the same time as us and we've kept in touch for the whole time. Irregularly, we have these gatherings where everyone would share a meal, the kids would all play together speaking fluent English and the adults would gossip and chat in Mandarin. I ended up hanging out a bit with my little sister and her friend who is pretty much my little sister too (I've known her since she was 2). When I walked into her room, I was really overwhelmed by the amount of Barbie dolls and posters/ads of European models covering her walls. I knew that she was obsessed with fashion like a lot of 14-year-old girls are, but to see it so visually in front of me was a bit disturbing.

I started talking to her about why she was so into fashion, make-up, shopping and all those stereotypically 'tween' things. I asked if all her friends were like that, what makes shopping so enjoyable and why she wears so much make-up. She said she didn't know and "just likes it", so I stopped asking. It seems that she has kind of created an identity around consumption and presenting herself in an attractive way. She says she wears makeup for herself not for other people, it's "who she is" and she can't go outside without wearing it.

One of the major tensions at home is the cultural and generational difference between parents and kids. My parents and her parents have grown up in mainland China, they've lived through the Cultural Revolution, lived through the transition to opening up of China and intense modernization and industrialization. Communist thinking didn't seem to have changed domestic relationships between parents and children, still under quite Confucian influences, my parents' generation of bringing up children is along disciplinary lines. Our identity, our behavior reflects theirs. We can either give them face as in make them proud or lose them face (丢脸) as in embarrassing them, or tainting their reputation. There's a great fear in Chinese parents that children will become too westernized and go astray. Westernisation is almost seen as a form of corruption. Children are not autonomous and parents think they have the right to discipline and punish their children as they wish to mould them to be 'proper' and 'normal' to be conforming citizens. Emphasis on education and doing well in school is a

major priority for them. That's at least what it has been like for me and other Chinese kids my age.

So this kind of cultural and generational clash is really frustrating to deal with, language barriers doesn't help with communication either. Me and my sister's generational are much better at English than mandarin so when we're frustrated, and don't know how to express ourselves in Chinese, we resort to using English and it's hard for our parents to understand, hard for us to translate. Sometimes we just give up and give in. Hitting children is also really common, it's normative practice when a child gets "out of line". I've been smacked quite a few times growing up, even by other adults when I was disobedient. Compared to some of the other kids my age though, I got it pretty easy. A friend of mine used to be get hit really bad by her mum. Sometimes they confiscate cell phones, restrict access to communication technology and TV. I have to admit though, it isn't so black and white that children are always the victims. Seeing my sister these days, the way she treats my parents is not far from the way someone would treat a servant - expecting them to buy stuff, cook, clean, drive around for her. It's a constantly taking kind of relationship.

### From her mother's perspective

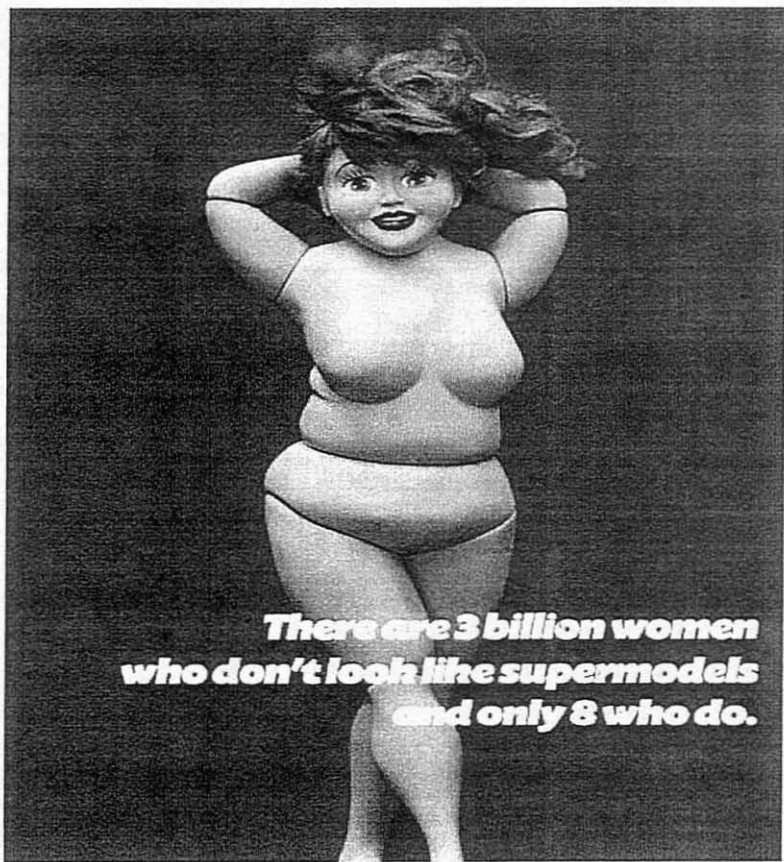
I was talking on the phone with my sister's friend's mother, she was really distressed and did not know what to do about her daughter's lack of interest in education. She voiced her concerns about how all she cares about is make-up, fashion and shopping - how it's not going to give her a career and a job. She needs to do well in school, at least pass all her subjects to do well in life. She said that she didn't mind her not eating Chinese food, not speaking mandarin at home, and not wanting to learn it at all - but her main concern was with her education. She just didn't know what to do, she confiscated her cell phone and took away her make-up. Her daughter has been saying that she hated her since about the age of 12 and she hasn't said why. I suspect it's to do with her disciplinary practices, not allowing her much freedom or as much freedom as her white friends.



## Barbies

In the midst of this ordeal, at one point she ended up revealing and explaining the role Barbies played in the way she is today. When she was younger, people would give her Barbies, and she's got quite a collection in her room. She said she got obsessed with playing with their hair, fiddling with their clothes and makeup. It also perhaps inspired and fueled her interest for shopping, 'cause that's why girls do, right?

Dumpling 饺子: Was thinking about what you wrote about consumerism, I wonder when capitalism etc alienates us from ourselves, land, each other, and our traditions etc, our identities/sense of self, become under-nourished. Then consumerism is a symptom of that hunger or starvation.



**There are 3 billion women  
who don't look like supermodels  
and only 8 who do.**

## Class and identity politics

The way class and ethnicity play out in capitalist workplaces can be quite disturbing. With my limited experience working for unions and translating for mandarin speakers I've come across real issues of racism and the use of ethnic identity to keep people in line or keep people divided. I met a Chinese fast food restaurant worker the other day who was filing a personal grievance against her manager who has treated her unfairly. She was getting her hours cut ever since she started going out with a co-worker, and the couple were made to choose either their job or their partner. While there's no official dating policy in this restaurant, their relationship was under scrutiny. She ended up resigning because of the stress it caused her. But when asked how this situation has affected her personal life, she answered that she's going to find it hard to trust any Indian people "because they're liars, they're always lying". Me and my friend who's a union organizer were so taken aback by that, we didn't know how to react. Her manager is an arsehole but it shouldn't be blamed on his ethnicity. Another woman was also making a personal grievance against him, she said she got texts from him referring to an Indian female co-worker as "monkey". That word has quite strong racial connotations, but when we were talking about how racist it was, the woman mentioned that "but I dunno, he's Indian himself". It made me think about internal racism and the sexism aligned with that term. His position as a male manager gives him the power to get away from saying shit like that.

A question I've been thinking about is why is there so much racism in the workplace? Why is race often used to explain people's character? It is not just something white people use to maintain a system of ethnic inequality, it's also something marginalized ethnic groups use against each other in the competition for power or as a means of explaining certain behaviours. It's hard to know where to begin, but I think the prevalence of the idea of race, and the visibility of difference between people contributes to the accessibility of racist explanations. It's easier to blame someone's race, often it's the only explanation available to people. In a workplace situation especially, race also functions as a way of dividing people - the age old 'divide and rule' tactic used to maintain the hierarchical power structure and can act as a barrier to working class cross-ethnic solidarity.

## "Racism is not an opinion, it's a system"

Funnily enough, I came across this quote after browsing through comments under a Dead Prez video posted on Youtube lol. But it totally spoke to me, it was like one of those statements that make you snap and go "ahhh, wow it's so true!" It made me think of two things. One is how racism is so often thought about as part of someone's opinion. When someone's "being racist", it's their attitude and opinion, which individualises the problem. It's rarely thought of as being an ideological system that is engrained in colonial histories and entrenched in social institutions, in political and economics. It's a system that naturalises and justifies hierarchy. My understanding and experiences of racism that I can identify has always come from individuals or groups of people who I thought to be racist or prejudiced. The structural and systemic aspects of it are harder to identify and see.

Dumpling: Agreed! The other one is racism = prejudice + power.

To which I would have to add, systemic or structural power cos power can get a bit arbitrary, like muscles, or wealth, which doesn't necessarily add up to racism. This is a good way, and the above quote you found, when some white people say things like (this happened in a workshop I was running in school) "I'm happy at this new school, cos at my last school the Maoris and Samoans were real racist to me".

So it's good to know the difference between prejudice/bigotry, and racism which requires state, structural and institutional backing, combined often with colonial and imperial histories...





## **Appropriation and Appreciation**

There's a fine line between appropriation and appreciation. Or rather it's a very fuzzy murky ever-changing line. Maybe it also depends on where you're standing to how that line looks, and when it's being crossed.

We might roll our eyes at a bunch of drunk white kiwi males in a pub in England doing the haka, or disapprove of museums who refuse to return another countries historical artifacts. But what about Pakeha or commercial or institutional use of koru and kowhaiwhai, or a rich Pakeha person's house decked out in Japanese zen, or Indian chic decor.

There are no hard and fast answers as so many things are situational. How do we balance admiration for a marginalised or minority groups cultural and identity markers, and not simply turn them into another fad to be had, then discarded when fashion trends shift.

There are other underlying dynamics that feed into the murkyness of these threads.

How much of it is white settler guilt, seeking to distance its Pakeha culture, true-blue-Aussie, red-blooded American culture from its Anglo-European roots and colonial legacies. How much of it is cultural amnesia, or disassociative disorder, when grievances run so deep in home countries and those wounds continue to be manifested in the colonisation settlers and their descendants continue to met out. How much of it is the "oppressed" having absorbed the tenets of oppression and seek to distance themselves from that pain and shame, by doing the same thing to others? And then denying and trying to pretend it is all in the past and the hold no responsibility for it?

How much of it is settler descendent guilt that seeks to deny its birth, and the artifacts, symbols and people it associates with is supposed to be a marker of how far they've come from that racist, white supremacist colonial past.



A handy thing to remember is that whatever food you eat, whatever decor your room is, what clothes you wear, the friends you have, and whoever you have sex with, does not necessarily signal your opposition to race and ethnic oppression, or your acceptance of diversity and 'the other'.

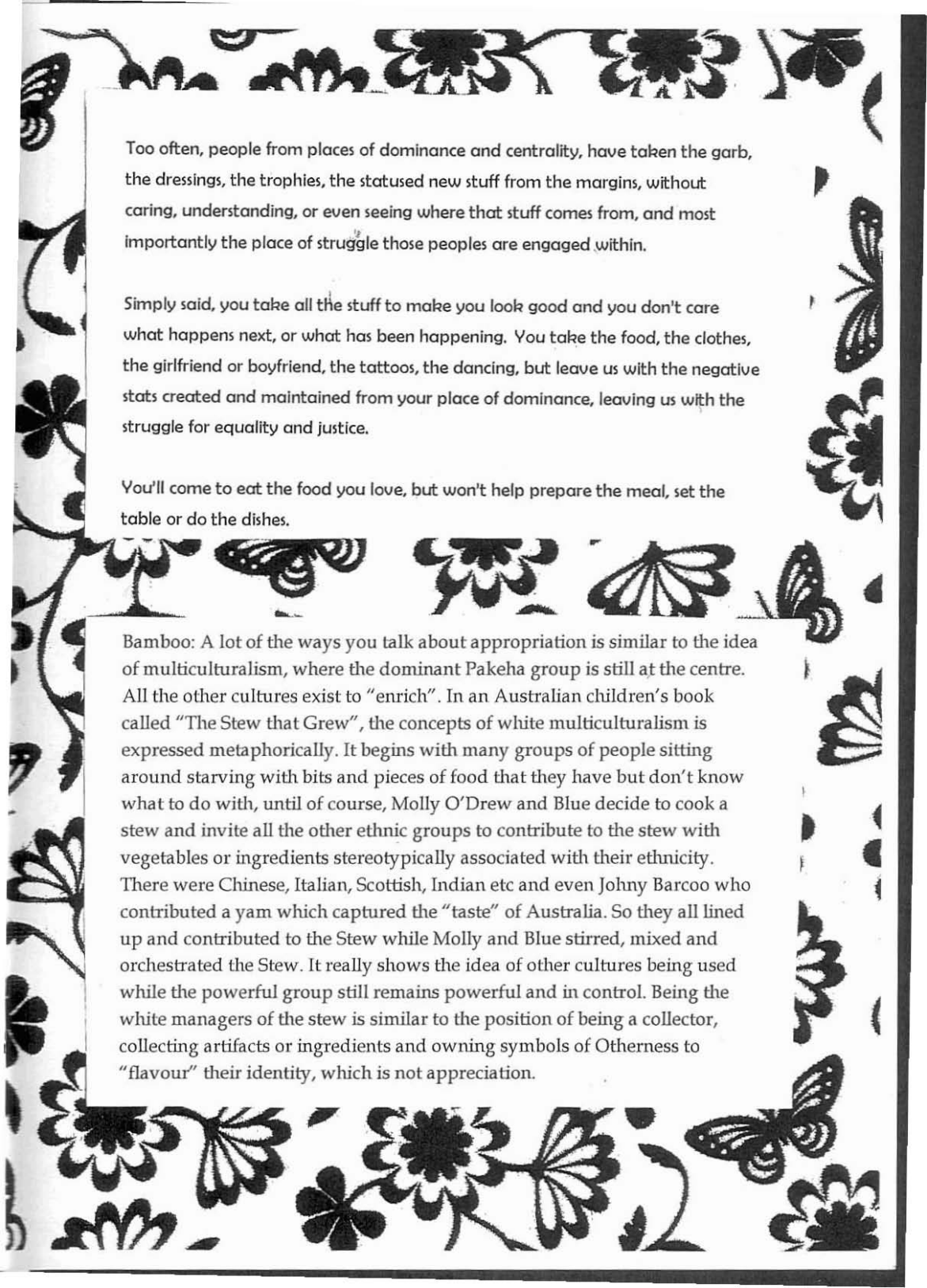
It is useful to remember that while men have girlfriends, wives, sisters, mothers, and daughters, it does not mean they are automatically not sexist, misogynistic or quite happy with what benefits patriarchies bestow upon them.

Proximity to oppressed or marginalised groups does not either. White American colonists and settlers lived in very close proximity with Black slaves. White boys and girls were raised by Black "wet nurses", taken from their own babies to feed white ones. The same goes with British occupation in India and South East Asia. White peoples lived side by side with coloured slaves/servants/maids, and that closeness did not mean solidarity and alliance.

Being decked out with exotic ethnic garb (girlfriend included) may have parallels, and signal (at least to me sometimes) of neo-collecting. When I mean collecting, I mean in the same ways empires went and took entire countries and continents as colonies, because they used a white ideology and a white male God, and declared it "the natural order". White "explorers" collected people and their sacred artifacts from diverse cultures for science, art, museums, galleries; for the better good and knowledge (of white people) and also for status, for trophy, white entertainment and spectacle.

Simply said, you get the ups when you have new stuff to show off to your mates. Be it a new car part, a new book, a new You Tube clip you've "found", new handbag, whatever. Neo-collecting.

The tensions come in where difference, diversity, the other and the paraphernalia of the other, is *experienced from a place of centrality*. And that place of centrality, or norm, or dominance, is not interrogated, and made visible to the experienter.



Too often, people from places of dominance and centrality, have taken the garb, the dressings, the trophies, the statused new stuff from the margins, without caring, understanding, or even seeing where that stuff comes from, and most importantly the place of struggle those peoples are engaged within.

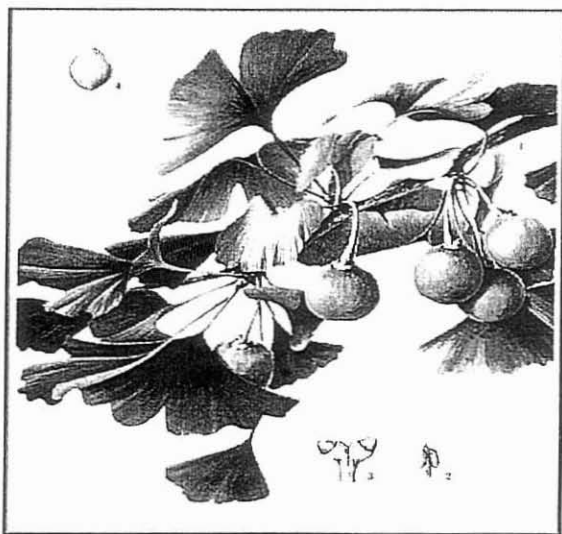
Simply said, you take all the stuff to make you look good and you don't care what happens next, or what has been happening. You take the food, the clothes, the girlfriend or boyfriend, the tattoos, the dancing, but leave us with the negative stats created and maintained from your place of dominance, leaving us with the struggle for equality and justice.

You'll come to eat the food you love, but won't help prepare the meal, set the table or do the dishes.

Bamboo: A lot of the ways you talk about appropriation is similar to the idea of multiculturalism, where the dominant Pakeha group is still at the centre. All the other cultures exist to "enrich". In an Australian children's book called "The Stew that Grew", the concepts of white multiculturalism is expressed metaphorically. It begins with many groups of people sitting around starving with bits and pieces of food that they have but don't know what to do with, until of course, Molly O'Drew and Blue decide to cook a stew and invite all the other ethnic groups to contribute to the stew with vegetables or ingredients stereotypically associated with their ethnicity. There were Chinese, Italian, Scottish, Indian etc and even Johnny Barcoo who contributed a yam which captured the "taste" of Australia. So they all lined up and contributed to the Stew while Molly and Blue stirred, mixed and orchestrated the Stew. It really shows the idea of other cultures being used while the powerful group still remains powerful and in control. Being the white managers of the stew is similar to the position of being a collector, collecting artifacts or ingredients and owning symbols of Otherness to "flavour" their identity, which is not appreciation.

## Language and Liberation

In a Pakeha-dominated English-speaking country, it's really liberating to find other people who speak your native tongue. Normally people don't talk to strangers on the street, there's this fear and anxiety about meeting new people and talking to strangers. Because people are always rushing around in the city, nobody really notices each other or has the time to stop and chat. It's really interesting the difference in communication, openness and friendliness you find when you talk to someone in their native language. Some people have come up to me and spoke in mandarin or when I begin talking to someone else in mandarin, they start opening right up because it's a lot easier to express themselves. The other day I saw this Chinese woman picking ginkgo berries from under a ginkgo tree. I went to a school with lots of ginkgo trees around, except we called them "poo-berry" trees, they stunk like faeces and if you got them on your shoe, you'd smell for the whole day. But anyway, I was really curious as to what she was using them for. I just walked up to her and stood close by, before I even asked what she was doing, she started talking to me in Mandarin - "this is for daughter, I'm using them to help her stop wetting the bed (尿床). They're really poisonous so don't eat them raw, you have to boil them for at least 20 minutes. They're also good for 老年痴呆 (senile people who are a bit blank sometimes).



## Imagining Solidarity

Solidarity is a concept of huge importance for movements for radical social change. I want to explore a bit into what it might mean in the context of solidarity between migrant and indigenous struggles, something I've thought about a bit but haven't come up with any simple answers. What I would really like to do is build solidarity between these struggles. But what does that mean and what would it entail? I think to begin with, there needs to be more awareness and understanding of each other's oppression and cultures, recognise the similarities and differences. In the context of Aotearoa, I want everyone (including myself) to have a fair understanding of the colonisation, violence and dispossession Māori have experienced at the hands of Pakeha colonizers; to understand the emotional, spiritual, social, political, economic and cultural impact of colonialism; to understand that this 'nation-state' as we know it was built upon this history of violence, but also the history of indigenous resistance. Secondly, I want us to tautoko (support, 支持) tino rangatiratanga (Māori self-determination, 毛利民族自决) and mana motuhake (independence, 独立). I also want to find ways to do this from our position as non-white migrants and relating our own histories of colonialism in order to empathise with Māori struggles.

Simultaneously, I want everyone (again, including myself) to understand where migrants have come from (by migrants I mean mostly non-British migrants). Arriving in a new country, where the language and culture is so different to your own can be very isolating. That's why migrants, especially new ones, tend to cluster with members of their own ethnic group.

I think it is really important for us non-white people to build direct solidarity and have direct interaction with each other on our own terms rather than through Pakeha translation or mediation.



Correction to the first Mellow Yellow: Bumble bees do not have five hearts. Sorry.

To this I would like to add that it is very naughty to tell people who are a bit gullible these kinds of "facts" knowing full well they will believe you...

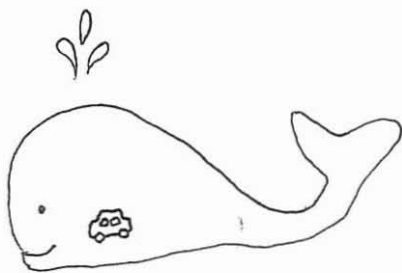
However, in light of this sad news about Bumble Bees, I have some new exciting facts about other creatures that I have vigorously checked on Wikipedia haha...



Squids have 3 hearts



Worms have five hearts (yes they do) AND they are hermaphrodites!!! How cool is that!!!



The Blue whale has a heart the size of a mini! AMAZING!!!

I hope that makes up for my BumbleBee error...

Tweet Tweet

Moo Moo

Woof

Quonk (that's a cross between a duck and a goose)

